

MLA Guidelines

This handout provides simple guidelines for using MLA style. See the *MLA Handbook*, 7th ed., in the Academic Support Center Writing Lab for further information.

1. Initial Page (sections 4.3)

- MLA does not require a separate title page. Note: Individual instructors may require a separate title page.
- The heading, left-justified and beginning with the first line of type, includes on separate lines and double spaced: 1) your name, 2) professor's name and title, 3) the course name and number, and 4) the due date of the paper.
- The title is centered below the heading.
- Center your title two lines (one double-space) below the initial heading. If you are using a subtitle, separate the title from the subtitle with a colon.

2. Margins and Page Number Header (sections 4.1, 4.3, and 4.4)

- Use one-inch margins on all sides of all pages. All information, with the exception of the page number header, should be within these margins.
- The page number header (your last name and page number) should be ½" from the top of the page and ½" from the first line of text, lining up with the right margin.

3. Spacing (section 3.7.2, 4.2, and 4.3)

- All text is double-spaced, including headings.
- Indent the first line of all paragraphs ½" (5 spaces).
- Indent block quotations 1" (10 spaces). Indent an additional ¼" (3 spaces) on any line of a block quotation that begins a new paragraph in the original source.

4. Notes (sections 6.5, 6.5.1, and 6.5.2)

- Note numbers should be superscript.
- Place note numbers at the end of the sentence, clause, or phrase containing the material quoted or referred to.
- Number notes consecutively throughout the paper.
- In the text of your paper, do not leave a space before the superscript number.
- Place notes with corresponding numbers either on the bottoms of the pages as footnotes or at the end of the paper as endnotes on a "Note" page.

4a. Endnotes

- The page(s) for endnotes should be headed with the word "Note" centered on the top line of the page.
- On the "Note" page, leave a space after the superscript number, before beginning the note.
- Indent notes five spaces before the superscript number so the note is in paragraph style.

4b. Footnotes

- Footnotes appear on the bottom of the page, beginning four lines (two double-spaces) below the text.
- Double-space between two separate notes.
- Indent the first line of each footnote five spaces.

5. In-text Citations (sections 6.1-6.5)

- Place all in-text citations at the most appropriate point within a sentence, usually as a parenthetical just before the period or, when using the author's name to introduce the quote, with the page number to follow as a parenthetical.

EXAMPLE: “. . . last words of quote” (Anderson 89).

OR

Anderson claims, “Quoted material” (89).

- The citation contains the last name of the author(s) and the page(s) where the material can be located.
- Use line numbers, rather than page numbers, when referring to or quoting poetry. Also remember that certain older texts, such as the Bible and Shakespeare's plays, have their own numbering systems.
- See section 3.6.5 for special guidelines pertaining to religious and scholarly works (Bible, laws or acts, musical compositions, etc.)

6. Block Quotes (section 3.7.2)

- Block quoting style is used with quotes of more than four lines.
- The first word of the quote begins on a new line.
- Quotation marks are not used.
- The entire quote, double-spaced, is typed 1” in from the left margin. In quoting two or more paragraphs, indent the first line of each paragraph an additional ¼ inch.
- The citation is placed at the end of the quote, outside the period.

7. Miscellaneous (sections 3.4.1, 3.5.2, 3.6.2,)

- MLA style recommends *italicizing* titles of books, pamphlets, periodicals, and long poems. Generally, *italicize* the titles of whole published works and use quotation marks for the parts of those works, such as chapter titles, etc.
- In your text, introduce source authors by their first and last names. Thereafter, refer to them by their last names only. The same applies to musicians, artists, etc.
- For numbers, use numerals in scientific and statistical material. Otherwise, generally spell out numbers written in one or two words or that begin a sentence, and use numerals for all others, including numbers used with abbreviations or symbols (6 lbs. or 3%), in addresses, in dates, in decimal fractions (3.2), and in page references (page 5).